

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of ~~playing a game~~operating a gaming system, said method comprising the steps of:

accepting a wager ~~from a player~~;

presenting a main game including the step of displaying at least a first set of cards to generate a main game hand;

determining ~~the~~an outcome of said main game comprising comparing said main game hand to a set of predetermined winning hands;

if said main game hand is a predetermined winning hand, awarding said player a winning amount and determining if said winning hand corresponds to any of a plurality of ~~a~~ predetermined category of a bonus event categories and, if so, incrementing associating a value associated with that ~~the corresponding bonus category of~~ said bonus event; and

~~playing said~~receiving an input from the player at a time after placing the wager, said input causing play of a bonus event, said play of said bonus event comprising the a random selection of ~~at least~~ one of a plurality of the bonus categories of said bonus event and awarding a bonus winning according to the value, if any, associated with the ~~at least one~~ selected bonus category, wherein said input is independent of whether the winning hand corresponds to any of the plurality of predetermined bonus categories.

Claim 2 (original): The method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said main game comprises a game of video poker and said predetermined winning hands comprise poker hands.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method in accordance with Claim 2 wherein said predetermined bonus categories of ~~said bonus event~~ comprise one or more of said predetermined winning hands.

Claim 4 (currently amended): The method in accordance with Claim 1 ~~wherein which includes said play of said bonus event is automatically initiated initiating said play of the bonus event once a winning hand corresponding to value is associated with each of said predetermined bonus categories has been received.~~

Claim 5 (original): The method in accordance with Claim 1 including multiplying said bonus winning by a multiplier to generate a score.

Claim 6 (currently amended): The method in accordance with Claim 5 wherein said multiplier comprises ~~the a sum of the a roll of two dice.~~

Claim 7 (original): The method in accordance with Claim 5 including the step of awarding a progressive award in the event said score meets a predetermined criteria.

Claim 8 (original): The method in accordance with Claim 5 including the step of awarding a progressive award if said score is at least one of the highest scores of a group of scores generated during a period of time.

Claim 9 (currently amended): The method in accordance with Claim 1 ~~wherein if said wager is of a first amount, permitting play of said main game only and if the wager is of a first amount, and permitting play of the main game and the bonus event only if said wager is of a second amount which exceeds said first amount, permitting play of said main game and bonus event.~~

Claim 10 (original): The method in accordance with Claim 1 including the step of funding said bonus award from a portion of said wager.

Claim 11 (new): A method of operating a gaming system, said method comprising:

- (a) accepting a wager from a player;
- (b) displaying a main game including displaying at least a first set of cards to generate a main game hand;
- (c) determining an outcome of the main game including comparing the main game hand to a set of predetermined winning hands;
- (d) if the main game hand is one of the predetermined winning hands:
  - (i) awarding the player a winning amount, and
  - (ii) determining if the winning hand corresponds to any of a plurality of predetermined bonus categories and, if so, associating one of a plurality of values with the corresponding bonus category, wherein said bonus categories include at least one bonus category which represents a combination of all of the values associated with the remaining bonus categories; and
- (e) receiving an input from the player at a time after placing the wager, said input causing play of a bonus event including:
  - (i) randomly selecting at least one of the bonus categories, and
  - (ii) awarding a bonus winning according to the value, if any, associated with at least one selected bonus category.

Claim 12 (new): The method of Claim 11, wherein the main game is a game of video poker and the predetermined winning hands are poker hands.

Claim 13 (new): The method of Claim 12, wherein the predetermined bonus categories include one or more of the predetermined winning hands.

Claim 14 (new): The method of Claim 11, which includes automatically initiating said play of the bonus event once a value is associated with each of the predetermined bonus categories.

Claim 15 (new): The method of Claim 11, which includes multiplying the bonus winning by a multiplier to generate a score.

Claim 16 (new): The method of Claim 15, wherein the multiplier is the sum of a roll of two dice.

Claim 17 (new): The method of Claim 15, which includes awarding a progressive award if the score meets a predetermined criteria.

Claim 18 (new): The method of Claim 15, which includes awarding a progressive award if the score is at least one of the highest scores of a group of scores generated during a period of time.

Claim 19 (new): The method of Claim 11, which includes permitting the player to play the main game if the wager is of a first amount, and permitting play of the main game and the bonus event only if the wager is of a second amount which exceeds the first amount.

Claim 20 (new): The method of Claim 11, which includes funding the bonus award from a portion of the wager.

Claim 21 (new): A method of operating a gaming system, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) accepting a wager from a player;
- (b) presenting a main game including the step of displaying at least a first set of cards to generate a main game hand;
- (c) determining an outcome of said main game comprising comparing said main game hand to a set of predetermined winning hands;
- (d) if said main game hand is a predetermined winning hand, awarding said player a winning amount and determining if said winning hand corresponds to any of a plurality of predetermined bonus categories and, if so, associating a value with the corresponding bonus category; and
- (e) repeating steps (a) to (d) until an input is received from the player, said input causing play of a bonus event, said play of said bonus event comprising a random selection of at least one of the bonus categories, and awarding a bonus winning according to the value, if any, associated with the at least one selected bonus category.

Claim 22 (new): The method of Claim 21, which includes, after awarding the bonus winning, deleting each of the values, if any, associated with the predetermined bonus categories.

Claim 23 (new): The method of Claim 21, wherein the main game is a game of video poker and the predetermined winning hands are poker hands.

Claim 24 (new): The method of Claim 23, wherein the predetermined bonus categories include one or more of the predetermined winning hands.

Claim 25 (new): The method of Claim 21, which includes automatically initiating said play of the bonus event once a value is associated with each of the predetermined bonus categories.

Claim 26 (new): The method of Claim 21, which includes multiplying the bonus winning by a multiplier to generate a score.

Claim 27 (new): The method of Claim 26, wherein the multiplier is the sum of a roll of two dice.

Claim 28 (new): The method of Claim 26, which includes awarding a progressive award if the score meets a predetermined criteria.

Claim 29 (new): The method of Claim 26, which includes awarding a progressive award if the score is at least one of the highest scores of a group of scores generated during a period of time.

Claim 30 (new): The method of Claim 21, which includes permitting the player to play the main game if the wager is of a first amount, and permitting play of the main game and the bonus event only if the wager is of a second amount which exceeds the first amount.

Claim 31 (new): The method of Claim 21, which includes funding the bonus award from a portion of the wager.